R&D activties for development and marketing of diversified jute products to suit consumer preference abroad. A High Powered Committee has been established to sutdy the matter at length with the objective of modernisation, diversification and export promotion of jute products. multi-dimensional activities have been undertaken for promotion of jute exports including participation in international fairs, organising buyers' -sellers' meets, commissioning of market studies, liaising with importers and end-users and conducting publicity campaigns. In addition, exports have been promoted through extension of marketing assistance and linking of DGS&D orders for supply of jute bags with export obligation.

Income criterion for determining poverty line

*469. SHRI MOTURU HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Planning Commission has assessed that a per capita annual income level of Rs. 11060 should now be considered as the criterion for determining poverty line as against Rs. 6400 at 1985 rates; and

(b) if so, how far the present estimation that the percentage of people living below the poverty line has declined from 37 per cent to 25 per cent, is correct?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) The Planning Commission have updated the poverty line of Rs. 6400 per annum per household (in rural areas) at 1984-85 prices to Rs. 11060 per annum per household at 1991-92 prices.

(b) The percentage of people below the poverty line is estimated to have declined from 37.4 per cent of total population in 1983-84 to 29.9 per cent in 1987-88 even after adjusting the poverty line for price rise. The figure of 25.8 per cent was only an expectation of poverty level to be achieved in 1989-90 as mentioned in the Seventh Plan document prepared in 1985.

Time-barred amnesty scheme for firms

*470. SHRI KAMAL MORARKA: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have shelved its plan to announce a time-barred amnesty scheme for firms guilty of violating the Companies Act, 1956;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) if not, by when Government would take a decision to announce the plan?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI K. VIJAYA BHASKARA REDDY): (a) and (b) In the meeting of the Company Law Advisory Committee held on 18-1-1991,, it was suggested that companies which have not filed balance sheets/annual returns for the last three years be allowed to do so on payment of a compounding fee. The suggestion involved belated filing of documents and condonation of delay as also withdrawal of prosecution cases filed, if any. As per Section 621-A of the Companies Act, 1956, inserted by the Companies (Amendment) Act, 1988, certain offences (not being an offence punishable with imprisonment only) are compoundable by